

Effort Reporting Cost Sharing

Definition

“Cost Sharing” occurs when the University “shares” a portion of a sponsored project’s costs. Cost sharing can take many forms, including payroll, equipment costs, Facilities and Administrative costs, etc. For effort reporting purposes, cost sharing is effort promised in a proposal where funding for that effort is not provided by the sponsor. In such a case, the percentage of salary charged to a sponsored project is less than the percentage of effort devoted to that project; the difference represents cost sharing.

Cost sharing may either be “committed” or “uncommitted.” In general, proposals should include only the minimum amount of cost sharing necessary to meet sponsor’s requirements, and voluntary committed cost sharing is strongly discouraged.

Committed Cost Sharing

Mandatory Cost Sharing is required by the sponsor as a condition of obtaining an award. Mandatory cost sharing also includes cost sharing on an NIH grant when the salary of a faculty member exceeds the salary cap that NIH has placed on the compensation chargeable in whole or in part to such grant.

Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing is not required by a sponsor or by the terms of the award, but is nevertheless promised in the proposal or in subsequent communication with the sponsor.

Whenever mandatory or voluntary committed cost sharing is proposed, the source of funds must be identified and approval obtained from the person with authority over those funds. Expenses that represent mandatory and voluntary committed cost sharing must be treated consistently and uniformly, and may be counted only once toward matching requirements. The Principal Investigator and/or the Effort Coordinator must document the fulfillment of the committed cost sharing and maintain compliance with the sponsor’s requirements.

All Committed Cost Sharing must be included in the annual effort certification in order to document that the commitment to the sponsor has been satisfied and that the funding of such activity has been properly reflected (i.e., not charged to another sponsored project).

Uncommitted Cost Sharing

Uncommitted Cost Sharing is that which is neither required by the sponsor (i.e. Mandatory Cost Sharing) nor committed by the Principal Investigator (i.e. Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing), but nevertheless is provided during the course of the sponsored project.

In preparing the annual effort certification, uncommitted cost sharing is not separately reportable, nor is it considered cost sharing on the project to which it was devoted. Instead, it should be included as part of the Teaching/Departmental Research effort.

Reporting Cost Sharing

All cost sharing commitments should be communicated to effort coordinators. Effort coordinators can enter cost share information in ECRT using the “Add Cost Sharing” option from the “Manage” menu.

Additional Information

For more information, see the Columbia University Policy on Cost Sharing, at <http://www.effortreporting.columbia.edu/policy.html>. If you have additional questions, please contact us at effort-reporting@columbia.edu.